

This book is a credit to everyone involved with its production but above all to the teams (identified in the initial acknowledgments page) which synthesized and evaluated the information it contains. It is an eye-opener to anyone not previously aware of the extent of consumptive commercial use of reptiles worldwide, and a sobering commentary on their future. It should serve to promote wise management, regulation and enforcement.

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Ontario Herpetofaunal Summary 1984

Compiled by Michael J. Oldham and Donald A. Sutherland.
1986. Essex Region Conservation Authority and World
Wildlife Fund Canada. 214 pp.

Ontario Herpetofaunal Summary 1986

Edited by Wayne F. Weller and Michael J. Oldham. 1988.
Ontario Field Herpetologists, Cambridge, Ontario. 221
pp.

Ontario Herpetofaunal Summary 1986 Technical Supplement

Edited by Michael J. Oldham and Wayne F. Weller. 1989.
Ontario Field Herpetologists, Cambridge, Ontario. 197
pp.

These four volumes are the output to date of an ambitious continuing project, one of whose objectives is to map the distributions of the 49 or 50 native species of amphibians and reptiles in Ontario. (Canada as a whole has only 84 to 86 native species depending on whether you lean to lumping or splitting.) Also included are two introduced species, the Red-eared Slider (*Pseudemys* [now *Trachemys*] *scripta*) and the Box Turtle (*Terrapene carolina*).

The Ontario Herpetofaunal Summary (OHS) was begun in 1984 with a call for the participation of observers throughout the province and a promise to produce an annual report listing and mapping all contributed records for that year. When the results of the 1984 surveys appeared in 1986 they assured the continued success of the project. Nothing enthuses observers and financial supporters like actually seeing, within a reasonable time, the results of their contributions. In subsequent years, observations have continued to pour in at an accelerating rate.

Although publication time has subsequently lagged, the scope of the project has become increasingly ambitious. The species accounts were expanded in the 1985 and 1986 volumes. What were, initially, only brief summaries of observations with locality lists and distribution maps have evolved into

Note: A complete current listing of all animals and plants on the CITES Appendices (Control List 9, 18 January 1991) and information and forms for permits is available from the: Administrator, Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species, Canadian Wildlife Service, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0E7 (613-953-1411). Failure to have required import or export permits for any listed species alive or dead, or parts of listed species raw or manufactured, can result in customs seizure of specimens or goods without return. A complete list of CITES publications is available from the CITES Secretariat in Switzerland (see above).

Ontario Herpetofaunal Summary 1985

Edited by Michael J. Oldham. 1988. World Wildlife Fund
Canada, Essex Region Conservation Authority, and
Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. 206 pp.

longer discussions with additional detail including histograms of seasonal observations. Changes in nomenclature have been noted and the reference sections have kept up with the literature current to the time of each publication.

The maps have also evolved with the volumes. Initially they were outlines showing counties and districts, one for southern Ontario and one for northern. Later, a grid of ten-kilometre squares was added to the southern Ontario maps to facilitate plotting with an early computer program and to stimulate greater coverage effort by challenging observers to fill in empty squares. With more sophisticated programs automated plotting will produce more precise gridless locations in future volumes.

In the initial year the introductory sections, all species accounts with summaries, locality lists, and maps, references and the list of contributors, could easily be accommodated in a single volume. By the third they required two, one of these for locality lists alone. As compilation time lengthened, it also became apparent that annual publication could not be achieved. The most recent instalment, nominally for 1986, has an added section of mapped records for all species up to and including data received through 1988, though the locality lists and analysis for 1987 and 1988 could not be included. It also has a section pointing out, species by species, areas in the expected ranges and/or at their edges where more concen-

trated work is badly needed. In the 1985 and 1986 summaries, species accounts were assigned to 29 individuals especially knowledgeable or interested in particular species.

There are a few negative comments worth making. The histograms added in the recent summary, unfortunately, are more decorative than instructive and likely depict observer intensity better than amphibian or reptile activity. They lump adults and juveniles without discrimination. The number of observations, not numbers of individuals, are used and all Ontario data are pooled together as if the province was homogeneous in habitat and climate. The first edition did not distinguish records where museum specimens were available for verification from sight records, and later editions still often do not cite catalogue numbers. This seems trivial, but is not if a citation is to be verified in future. Without a catalogue number, an identification that is later changed at the museum can not be easily traced to its specimen. In one case where a museum is given, it is inaccurate because no check was made on whether a specimen was actually deposited where originators of the record first indicated it would be. Even though observers are noted for each record, we must trust solely the editors' screening for judgement on reliability under the conditions taken. On current maps all dots are the same regardless of whether they are documented (by specimens or photographs) or undocumented; for this information the text has to be searched. Listings of localities for 1986 have added a vagueness factor by giving indefinite descriptors and incomplete grid references in the technical supplement. The argument is that this protects the exact location of populations from unscrupulous collectors. It may, however, also keep those aware of impending development ignorant of the precise location of habitats that are important to defend, and will likely prevent workers at some future date from verifying the continued existence of populations. To counter that those who would use detailed information legitimately can contact the summary for them is to assume that they will make this added effort, that legitimate requests can be recognized, and that the Summary custodians will always respond from their full data intact forever. In the long term, the only assured availability for data is by full publication, and the long-term benefits of this may outweigh possible occasional short-term misuse. It is its policy of secretiveness and lack of emphasis on the importance of verification that removes the *Summary* from scientific literature and will detract from its usefulness as a primary reference for future monographic treatments of individual species ranges and detailed zoogeographical and ecological syntheses.

Oldham, Weller, Sutherland, their collaborators, and the legion of volunteer observers, are to be

applauded for having boldly undertaken this task. That they poured so much of their own personal time into a project that will be useful to many conservationists, and be a starting base for tracking valid records for many other projects, despite its deficiencies, can not be overvalued. In the past decade, neither major museum in Ontario, their staffs and funding spread so thinly over other priorities, could possibly have undertaken such a labour-intensive, long-term endeavour no matter how badly it was needed. Both have, however, contributed to it. The Canadian Museum of Nature, with approximately 12 000 Ontario catalogued collections, whose staff and volunteers have contributed since 1985, will be an even greater source in the next stage when all pre-1984 collections, literature records and archival observations are added to the data base (perhaps even with appropriate catalogue numbers cited). Similarly, the Royal Ontario Museum has contributed recent records and will also be a primary source of historically valuable pre-1984 data.

The many financial supporters, the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, the Essex Region Conservation Authority, the World Wildlife Fund (Canada) and the Canadian Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Society, who have made the publications possible, are deserving of special note. One spin-off from the project already is the contribution of the most recent data (provided in advance of the next publications) for updating the series of Status Reports completed or in preparation for 21 species of amphibians and reptiles regarded as possibly at risk in their Ontario range by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC).

The *1986 Summary* includes an announcement of the formation of the Ontario Field Herpetologists to publish it and future volumes, a section analyzing the data base so far, and detailed instructions to observers. The next step for the *Summary* is the synthesis of all observations from 1984 to 1990 inclusive, and the inclusion of all pre-1984 records from field notes, published literature and museum collections both in Canada and in the United States. In 1984, 169 individuals contributed 2460 records; in 1985, over 300 individuals contributed 4534 records; in 1986, 586 participants contributed 6100 records. Current estimates are that total records will be at least 60 000 when observations to the end of 1990 are combined with the pre-1984 archival records still being compiled. Due to the steady increase in data, future volumes will treat groups individually, the first in late 1992 on turtles and the one lizard, to be followed by snakes, frogs, and salamanders. Plans also include expanded discussions to add identification, life history and behaviour for each species; the *Summary* will thus become, in fact, a comprehensive Herpetology of Ontario.

Current prices for copies of volumes to date can be obtained from the Ontario Field Herpetologists, c/o M. E. Obbard, R. R. 22, Cambridge, Ontario N3C 2V4. Copies of the observation cards and instructions to contributors are also available from this address on request.

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Atlas des amphibiens et des reptiles du Québec 1988-89. Version préliminaire

Compilé par J. Roger Bider et Sylvie Matte. 1990. Société d'Histoire Naturelle de la Vallée du St-Laurent, Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue, Québec, et Ministère du Loisir, de la Chasse et de la Pêche, Direction de la Gestion des

Espèces et des Habitats, Service des études écologiques, 150, boulevard St.-Cyrille Est, Québec, Québec G1R 4Y1.

Atlas des amphibiens et des reptiles du Québec. Version détaillée

Compilé par J. Roger Bider et Sylvie Matte. 1991. Société d'Histoire Naturelle de la Vallée du St-Laurent, Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue, Québec, et Ministère du Loisir, de la Chasse et de la Pêche, Direction de la Gestion des

Espèces et des Habitats, Service des études écologiques, 150, boulevard St.-Cyrille Est, Québec, Québec G1R 4Y1.

tions and computerized later, although now virtually the entire data set is on D-base. The Quebec records were computer entered on diskette from the start and transferred in 1991 to a permanent retrievable data bank D-base program. Whereas the Ontario project was envisioned as continuing at least for five successive years, the Quebec one was financed initially for one and then extended. Both have broadened in scope, with success.

Roger Bider has been a active force in Quebec natural history since the mid-1950s. His initial apprenticeship as summer assistant to the turtle surveys of J. E. Mosimann, then at the Université de Montréal, solidified his interest in reptiles and amphibians. Bider went on to develop sand-track plots particularly for assessing the numbers and activity of small mammals and has also authored studies on birds, but has continued to return repeatedly to papers on reptiles and amphibians, and especially on the ecology of turtles. He has been a prolific researcher, graduate student supervisor, and teacher at MacDonald College of McGill University since the 1960s. In addition, was a founder of the St. Lawrence Valley Natural History Society, and was instrumental in establishing its Ecomuseum.

Starting in 1988, Quebec standard observation cards were distributed to all who volunteered to contribute. The initial response was excellent, 177 contributors in 1988, but only 74 in 1989, though the number of observations per observer went up indicating that the most enthusiastic continued to assist the project and expand their contribution. Record totals are 4969 pre-1988, 875 from 1988, 661 from 1989, and 800 from 1990. The use of the data from collections, references and observation cards of the National Museum of Natural Sciences (now the Canadian Museum of Nature) provided about 5000 entries. Data on other museum collections were provided by the Royal Ontario Museum and the Carnegie Museum, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

In the atlas project he is joined by an able collaborator and former student Sylvie Matte (B.Sc. 1987 from McGill in Wildlife Resources). Funding was provided by the Ministère du Loisir, de la Chasse et de la Pêche. The latter has increasingly supported surveys and reports on ecological and utilization data for amphibians and reptiles in Quebec and thus made a major contribution to their study and future conservation in the province.

The bulk of each atlas is individual accounts for the 34 native freshwater and/or terrestrial and the one marine species. The latter is the Tortue luth (Leatherback Turtle) *Dermochelys coriacea*, recorded in the Gulf of the St. Lawrence. Two introductions or escapes; Tortue à oreilles rouges (Red-eared Slider), *Chrysemys* [= *Pseudemys*, = *Trachemys*] *scripta*; Tortue tabatière (Box Turtle), *Terrapene carolina* are also given individual accounts in the 1990 edition; in the 1991 version they are combined with L'iguane commun, *Iguana iguana*, and L'anole vert, *Anolis carolinensis*, in an introduced species section. Individual accounts of the first two had also been included in the Ontario Herpetofaunal Summary mixed in with native species.

One atlas objective was to encourage herpetologists and naturalists in Quebec to contribute recent observations. In this, the project was largely modeled after the highly successful Ontario Herpetofaunal Summary. There are differences, however. The Ontario project started with the concept of producing publications of the data by year, and adding at some future time historical distribution from museum collections, publications, and archival field notes. The Quebec one started with a survey of existing collections and then called for public participation. The Ontario project started as hand compila-

Each species account has a brief introductory statement summarizing the range, followed by a county by county listing of all records and sources,



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